



Runge Conservation Nature Center

Habitat Happenings

September & October 2004

The Cute Coot

You are a coot. You're about 12 inches long, dark grey, and you live in a marsh. You have a small head and a bill like a chicken, which you use to root around for your favorite foods—water plants and invertebrates. Your wings are so short that you have to take off running noisily across the top of the water until you get up enough speed to fly. Your tail is so short it looks like you don't have one, and your toes have big, wide lobes. You are humble. Every day, you just try to get by, and you bother no one. You are accepted well enough among your peers, but with people? Fergettabout it!

If a duck hunter takes the trouble to shoot you, she will never live it down. She is laughed out of the blind first, then the check station. It's bad enough that the limit on most waterbirds is one or two, while the limit on you is fifteen. Your meat is said to be greasy, fishy, or poisonous, though no one admits they've tried you. And woe to the birdwatcher who expresses to the rest of the group the most remote interest in you. Quickly, silently, his name shifts over to the do-not-invite-to-the-next-outing list. Have you heard people call each other a "crazy coot" or "an old coot"? They don't mean nice things, do they?

It's too bad some people just adopt other people's low opinions about coots without taking a closer look for themselves. Coots are intriguing. For one thing, they have an unusually wide range of sounds, from honks and quacks to whistles and whinnies. In one call, a coot can sound like a human baby, a miniature horse, a regular chicken, and a happy pig. How cool is that?

Come in to the nature center anytime and find out more about slightly overlooked creatures like the coot. The coot? How cute!

—Kevin Lohraff, Interpretive Programs Supervisor





Volunteer News



Over 500 people attended our Corps of Discovery outdoor skills event. Runge volunteers helped make it a hoop-n-hollerin' success!



Exhibits

September and October **PJ Webber, Watercolor**

artist PJ's art subjects are usually native Missouri wildlife, local flowers, and scenes common to Missouri. Her artwork has been accepted into national exhibitions including Watercolor USA, the Missouri Watercolor National, and the National Arts for the Parks program. Her paintings have been featured on calendars and catalog covers. She is a signature member of the Missouri Watercolor Society. **Meet PJ as she brings the canvas to life on September 4 from 1:00-4:00PM at the nature center.**

September 25-October 2 **Hunting, Fishing and Shooting Sports Patch Collection**

Collecting and trading baseball cards are as American as Mom and apple pie. But what about collecting and trading patches? Boy Scouts are probably the most famous for collecting Scout patches from all over the world. They participate in serious swapping sessions at National Jamborees that rival the most intense negotiations of corporate mergers.

In the last 30 years or so, wildlife and shooting sports groups have developed their own patches, ranging from simple two-color pictures and names to complex multi-color works of art.

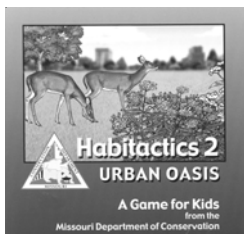
Dr. David M. Knotts, MDC Forestry Education Coordinator has one of the most extensive collections of patches representing wildlife and conservation organizations, shooting sports, hunter education, and the outdoors. He began his collection in the early 1970's and has patches of all shapes and sizes, full-color and plain, depicting the outdoors and outdoor hobbies. Some are rare and valuable.

In conjunction with National Hunting and Fishing week, Dr. Knotts will display a representative sample of his collection at the Nature Center.

Nature Shop News

September/October featured item

20% off



This CD computer game challenges you to create a healthy place for urban wildlife to live. You plant the trees, flowers, and shrubs and see what appears! Turn an empty lot into a home for all sorts of animals—and a place for people to enjoy the natural world, too. Extra games give you a chance to quickly check what you know about Missouri's native plants and wildlife.

Discounted price: CD—**\$8.00** plus tax

Heritage card discount does not apply.

Runge Conservation Nature Center is located in western Jefferson City. From U.S. 50, exit on Highway 179. Travel north for 1/4 mile to the Nature Center entrance on the left. The Nature Center is open Monday through Saturday 8:00AM to 5:00PM and Noon to 5:00PM on Sundays. Closed New Year's Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. No admission fee. 573/526-5544 FAX: 573/526-4496 www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/runge

HABITAT HAPPENINGS

**Buy deer permits early!
Earn a chance to win a lifetime
hunting and fishing permit!**

In partnership with the Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation, the Missouri Department of Conservation is offering an opportunity for resident Missouri deer hunters to avoid last-minute crowds at permit vendors and to have a chance to win the following:

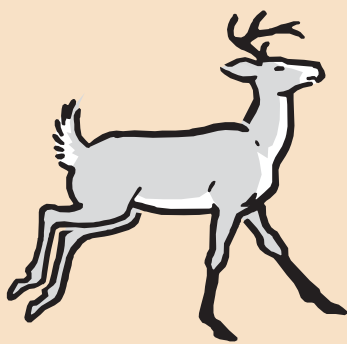
■ **First Prize:** Two winners will be awarded a Missouri Lifetime Conservation Partner Permit, which is good for the life of the permit holder and valid for small game and migratory bird hunting, fishing, and trout privileges.

■ **Second Prize:** Five other winners will be awarded a framed print of a Missouri wildlife scene.

Here's how to register to win!

■ Everyone who buys any resident firearms deer hunting permit by November 5, 2004, is automatically registered.

■ Missouri landowners and lessees who pick up their no-cost resident landowner deer hunting permits by this deadline also are eligible to win.



Winners will be announced December 1. The drawing is open to Missouri residents only. Missouri Department of Conservation employees and their immediate families are not eligible.

Hey Parents!

While big brother/sister attends Conservation Kids' Club, your preschooler (3 through 5 years of age) can be involved in a program at the same time. A preschool program will be available for siblings of Conservation Kids' Club members on Tuesday, September 21, 6:00PM and October 19, 7:00PM. No reservations required.

Conservation Kids' Club



Welcome to Conservation Kids' Club, a fun club created for kids 6 through 13 years old who love to explore nature and learn about wildlife. Come to our meeting and we'll sign you up. No reservations required to attend program.

Along Came a Spider

Tuesday, September 21 — 6:00-7:00PM

Pollywogs (Ages 6 through 8) and Bullfrogs (Ages 9 through 13) combine for this event.



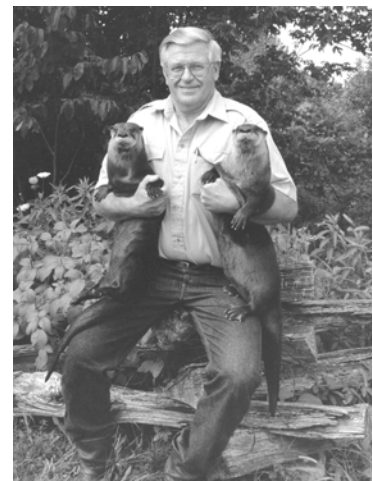
... and sat down beside you! Tiny legs and eight eyes don't make animals bad. In reality, spiders are very helpful, eating more insects than all the birds combined. Learn more about spiders as we hike the trails in search of our eight-legged friends.

Otterly Amazing

Tuesday, October 19 — 7:00-8:00PM

Pollywogs (Ages 6 through 8) and Bullfrogs (Ages 9 through 13) combine for this event.

Otters Otters
Underwaters
diving down
and gliding up;
Torpedo body
shoots right through
river waters
clear and blue;
Up to breathe
then down to play
tag and chase
the Otter way!



It's your chance to see a live river otter! Join National Geographic and Discovery Channel filmmaker Glenn Chambers for a fascinating program that explains otter life history and the successful restoration project. Watch an otter dive for minnows in the "see through" pool! You "Otter" be there!

**Dora and
friends
explore
Runge!**



**Haunted Habitats
October 29
6-9PM**

- Exploration Trail (3-7 yrs)
- Interpretation Stations (All ages)
- Straw Maze
- Hands-on activities
- Coloring Page
- Costume Corner
- Lots more FUN!

No reservations required. Rain date is October 30

Habitat Happenings

Runge Conservation Nature Center
P.O. Box 180
Jefferson City, MO 65102

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Jefferson City Missouri
Permit No. 274



September Events at Runge



To make a reservation, call Runge Conservation Nature Center **on or after 8:00AM on September 1st** to register for these programs (573/526-5544.) If you have to cancel, please call as soon as possible so someone on the waiting list can attend.

4 Saturday

Beginning Archery

Time: 10:00-11:30AM and 2:00-3:30PM

Ages: 8 years and older

"I shoot an arrow into the air, and where it lands..."

With a little practice we can help you hit the target. Join us at the nature center for some archery fun. We'll provide the equipment, instructions, and targets. You provide the smiles. Make a point to be here! Reservations required.

4 Saturday

Meet the Artist: PJ Webber

Time: 1:00-4:00PM

Ages: All

Meet PJ Webber who will exhibit her watercolor artwork at the nature center in September and October. She will demonstrate her watercolor techniques and bring her canvas to life. No reservations required.

9 Thursday

Gone Fishin'!

Time: 1:00-3:00PM

Ages: Preschool with caregiver

Hang up your "Gone Fishin'" sign and join us for some good old-fashion fishin'! We'll provide poles, tackle, and bait (or bring your own.) This is catch-and-release fishing, and folks ages 16-65 will need a current Missouri fishing license. Reservations required.

9 Thursday

Fall is for Ducks

Time: 7:00-8:00PM

Ages: 18 years and older

Fall is a great time to see ducks in Mid-Missouri. Grebes, teal, mallards, and ducks of all kinds can be found on ponds, lakes, and streams. Just so you're ready, Andy Raedeke from the Missouri Department of Conservation will speak on "Duck Identification." Learn more about how to tell one beautiful duck from another. Then you'll know what you're seeing when ducks are bobbing on the water! Program sponsored by the River Bluffs Audubon Society. No reservations required.

11 Saturday

Deer Hunting for Beginners

Time: 1:00-4:30PM

Ages: All

Ever wished you knew how to hunt deer? We will go over the basics of deer hunting for beginners, from tags to scouting, to clothing and hunting methods. Reservations required.

12 Sunday






Wet 'n Wild Wetland

Time: 4:00-5:00PM

Ages: All

There's a zoo in the goo of our nature center wetland! You may be surprised at what is lurking beneath the muddy surface of a marsh or a prairie pothole. We'll have nets, buckets, and magnifiers to capture and observe the wetland critters up close. Wear shoes for wading and getting muddy. Reservations required.

Trail rating system for the trails advertised for the Runge Hiking Club.

-  -Easiest trail—flat terrain with no obstructions (like the Katy Trail)
-  -Slight inclines and/or few obstructions (gravel, few rocks)
-  -Moderate inclines and/or occasional rocks or roots
-  -Occasional significant inclines and/or rocks or roots
-  -Most difficult—significant inclines, obstructions, and/or loose rocks

Habitat Happenings

16 Thursday

Wildlifers: Nature Quilt Block

Time: 10:00-11:30AM, 1:00-2:30PM, 3:30-5:00PM, and 6:00-7:30PM

Ages: 50 years and older

The Carolina Parakeet was the only parrot native to Missouri. Join us this month and learn more about this beautiful bird and make a patchwork block to add to your bird collection. Reservations required.

16 Thursday

Hunter Education Course

Time: 6:00-9:00PM

Ages: 11 years and older

Learn how to hunt safely and responsibly. Students thirteen years of age and under must bring proof of age. Course continues on **Friday 17th, 6:00-10:00PM**, and concludes on **Saturday 18th, 8:00AM-Noon**. **Location: Runge Nature Center.** Reservations required.

19 Sunday

Make Way For Ducklings!

Time: 2:00-3:00PM

Ages: Families

Join us as one of America's favorite books comes to life. We'll share our favorite stories about ducks and other waterfowl. Bring your favorite stuffed or rubber duck! Reservations required.

22 Wednesday

Webelos Forester Badge

Time: 6:30-7:30PM

Ages: 4th and 5th grade boys

Reservations required.

23 Thursday

Gone Fishin'!

Time: 1:00-3:00PM

Ages: Homeschool - 7 years and older



Hang up your "Gone Fishin'" sign and join us for some good old-fashion fishin'! We'll provide poles, tackle, and bait (or bring your own.) This is catch-and-release fishing, and folks ages 16-65 will need a current Missouri fishing license. Reservations required.

25 Saturday

Runge Hiking Club

Time: 8:00AM-3:30PM

Ages: 18 years and older

It's hard to get enough of **Rock Bridge Memorial State Park**, with its wooded slopes, wet-weather waterfalls, and of course the natural bridge and all those sinkholes! We'll begin on the varied landscape of the **Spring Brook Trail** (2.5 miles ), where a friendly, shallow (3-10 inches deep), and refreshing wade is scheduled just before the 2-mile mark. After lunch, we'll hike the **Sinkhole Trail** (1.5 miles ), which begins at the historic site of Pierpont (French for "rock bridge.") Bring your lunch, water, hiking boots or comfortable shoes, and come dressed for the weather. Reservations required.

25 Saturday

Hunter Education Course

Time: 8:00AM-5:00PM

Ages: 11 years and older

Learn how to hunt safely and responsibly. Students thirteen years of age and under must bring proof of age. Course continues on **Sunday 26th, Noon-4:00PM**. **Location: Wal-Mart, Stadium Boulevard, Jefferson City.** Call Runge to make your reservations.

For the Little Ones

Duck, Duck, Goose

Waddling, paddling, or flying, take your pick. Ducks can do it all! These feathered friends will highlight our program this month. Quack, quack - come join us! Reservations required.

Babes In The Woods

Birth through 2 years of age

Tuesday, September 7 - 10:00AM

Sunday, September 19 - 2:00PM

Thursday, September 21 - 11:00AM

Thursday, September 30 - 10:00AM

Little Acorns

3 through 6 years of age

Thursday, September 9 - 10:00AM

Tuesday, September 14 - 6:00PM

Friday, September 17 - 10:00AM

Thursday, September 23 - 10:00AM

Saturday, September 25 - 10:00AM

Tuesday, September 28 - 2:00PM

25 Saturday

Runge Book Discussion Group

Time: 2:30-4:00PM

Ages: 18 years and older

In September, the Book Discussion Group will read and discuss the third section of **It's Raining Frogs and Fishes - Four Seasons of Natural Phenomena and Oddities of the Sky** by Jerry Dennis. This book is wonderful reading about the seasons with very enlightening illustrations! The third section is titled "Autumn." Read this section and come join us for a delightful discussion of the Autumn Season.

"As leaves fall and the sky becomes more noticeable, you're likely to look toward the heavens and wonder at their mysteries... Author Jerry Dennis and illustrator Glenn Wolff address the questions with intelligence, wit and authority." —*Atlanta Constitution*.

This book is available at Downtown Book and Toy with a 30% discount for Reading/Discussion Groups. Reservations required.

Art Inside the Park

September 16-19
at Memorial Park

This visual art exhibit is a wonderful opportunity to see the outdoors in a whole new way. Runge's "TREE ART" will focus on using natural mediums such as walnuts, honey, and seed. Runge Nature Center staff will be available to answer questions about Tree Art, Friday, September 17. The exhibit "ART INSIDE THE PARK" will be open to the public Friday evening and during park hours Saturday and Sunday. For more information check out the following website www.atelier-cms.com or call Carla Steck at 573/893-2424.

We're hungry and we don't mind you watchin'!

Stop by the nature center on the following days and watch the critters being fed.

September 3 & 24

Fish - 10:30AM & 11:00AM Turtles - 10:45AM



October Events at Runge



To make a reservation, call Runge Conservation Nature Center **on or after 8:00AM on September 1st** to register for these programs (573/526-5544.) If you have to cancel, please call as soon as possible so someone on the waiting list can attend.

2 Saturday

Firearms Safety for Youth Hunters

Time: 1:00-3:00PM

Ages: 6-10 years (Adult must attend with child)

Get your youth hunter ready to be safe during hunting season. We will cover the commandments of firearms and safety, safe methods for carrying a firearm, and tree stand safety. This is **NOT** a hunter education course. Reservations required.

5 Tuesday

Deer Processing

Time: 6:30-8:00PM

Ages: All

Going deer hunting? Then join us at the nature center to learn how to skin and process the deer you harvest this year. We'll show you techniques, safety tips, and answer any questions you have about do-it-yourself processing. Reservations required.

6 Wednesday

Earth and Sky Try-It

Time: 6:30-7:30PM

Ages: Girl Scout Brownies (grade school age)

Reservations required.

7 Thursday

Hunter Education Course

Time: 6:00-9:00PM

Ages: 11 years and older

Learn how to hunt safely and responsibly. Students thirteen years of age and under must bring proof of age. Course continues on **Friday 8th, 6:00-10:00PM**, and concludes on **Saturday 9th, 8:00AM-Noon**. Location: Runge Nature Center. Reservations required.

8 Friday

Weed Walk and Talk

Time: 6:00-8:00PM

Ages: 18 years and older

Aaaaah CHOO! Which weed really makes you sneeze? Is it lurking in your own backyard? Is golden-rod the culprit or is it ragweed? When do the "sneeze weeds" bloom? Dr. Stanley Horner, D.O. Allergy and Immunology Specialist, and Jan Syrgios, Naturalist, team up to provide you with Weed I.D. 101 and what to do to minimize your reaction to plant pollen. We'll take a 1/2 mile hike and then spend some time indoors discussing weed allergies. Don't let a little pollen keep you from enjoying the great outdoors! Reservations required.

Missourians walk toward better habitat

Missourians understand the importance of grassland habitat to a wide range of wildlife, including some endangered species. That's why hundreds of people will gather in North Jefferson City **October 9** and—rain or shine—take part in the Conservation Department's annual Healthy Habitat Walk/Run.

Race packets will be available starting at 8 a.m. at the Katy Trail pavilion at the junction of Highways 63 and 54. The race kicks off at 9 a.m. Participants may register for a 10K run, a 5K run or a 5K walk on a separate course.

Proceeds from the event will go to the Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation for habitat restoration, research and education projects for endangered animals and plants in Missouri. For more information, visit www.conservancy.state.mo.us/programs/es_walkrun/.

Habitat Happenings

9 Saturday

Wet 'n Wild Wetland

Time: 4:00-5:00PM

Ages: All

There's a zoo in the goo of our nature center wetland! You may be surprised at what is lurking beneath the muddy surface of a marsh or a prairie pothole. We'll have nets, buckets, and magnifiers to capture and observe the wetland critters up close. Wear shoes for wading and getting muddy. Reservations required.

10 Sunday

Beginning Archery

Time: 2:00-3:30PM

Ages: 8 years and older

"I shoot an arrow into the air, and where it lands..." With a little practice we can help you hit the target. Join us at the nature center for some archery fun. We'll provide the equipment, instructions, and targets. You provide the smiles. Make a point to be here! Reservations required.

14 Thursday

Sinks, Underground Streams & Caverns

Time: 7:00-8:00PM

Ages: 18 years and older



Combine water and limestone and you get amazing geologic features. Missouri has plenty of sinkholes, springs, and caves. Learn all about the wonders of "Missouri's Karst" from Jim Vandike. Vandike is the Chief of the Groundwater Section for the Missouri Department of Natural Resources. Program sponsored by the River Bluffs Audubon Society. No reservations required.

16 Saturday

Runge Hiking Club

Time: 8:00AM-5:30PM

Ages: 18 years and older

As many as 5,000 people may have been living in the area now known as **Van Meter State Park**, when Marquette and Joliet encountered them in 1673. The explorers recorded their name as *Oumessourit*, which, loosely translated, means "people of the big canoes." The **Loess Hills Trail** (2 miles ) is named for windblown glacial dust that produces immense trees. On the **Old Fort Trail** (2 miles , we'll hike over mysterious earthworks thought to pre-date the Missouri Indians. Bring your lunch, water, hiking boots or comfortable shoes, and come dressed for the weather. Reservations required.

20 Wednesday

Hunter Education Course

Time: 5:30-9:30PM

Ages: 11 years and older

Learn how to hunt safely and responsibly. Students thirteen years of age and under must bring proof of age. Course continues on **Thursday 21st, 5:30-9:30PM**, and concludes on **Friday 22nd, 5:30-9:30PM**. Location: Wal-Mart, Stadium Boulevard, Jefferson City. Call Runge to make your reservations.

20 Wednesday

Webelos Naturalist Badge

Time: 6:30-7:30PM

Ages: 4th and 5th grade boys

Reservations required.

21 Thursday

Wildlifers: Nature Quilt Block

Time: 10:00-11:30AM, 1:00-2:30PM, 3:30-5:00PM, and 6:00-7:30PM

Ages: 50 and older

Join us this month as we learn about the American White Pelican and make a patchwork block to add to your bird collection. Lewis & Clark mentioned seeing pelicans a few times on the trip up the Missouri River. Reservations required.

For the Little Ones

Changes In Nature

Fall days are busy days for animals before the cold winter settles in. We will listen for the sounds of activity around us and learn how different animals prepare for the winter to come. Reservations required.

Babes In The Woods

Birth through 2 years of age

Saturday, October 2 – 10:00AM

Tuesday, October 5 – 11:00AM

Friday, October 15 – 10:00AM

Thursday, October 21 – 11:00AM

Little Acorns

3 through 6 years of age

Sunday, October 3 – 2:00PM

Thursday, October 7 – 10:00AM

Tuesday, October 12 – 11:00AM

Tuesday, October 12 – 6:00PM

Friday, October 22 – 11:00AM

Saturday, October 23 – 10:00AM

23 Saturday

Runge Book Discussion Group

Time: 2:30-4:00PM

Ages: 18 years and older

In October, the Book Discussion Group will read and discuss the fourth and final section, titled "Winter" from *It's Raining Frogs and Fishes - Four Seasons of Natural Phenomena and Oddities of the Sky* by Jerry Dennis. This is a wonderful book to read, study, and to share with others. Read this last section and join us for an informal discussion of the winter season.

"This delightful look at nature...reminds adults—especially in this hectic, fast-paced, just-do-it world—that it is more than OK, it is desirable, to be child-like and to look up at the heavens and ask why." —*Toledo Blade*.

This book is available at Downtown Book and Toy with a 30% discount for Reading/Discussion Groups. Reservations required.



29 Friday

Haunted Habitats Dora and Friends Explore Runge

Time: 6:00-9:00PM

Ages: All

Join us for a fun-filled evening along with Dora and her friends as we explore Runge. You can help us get ready for Dora's journey by coloring the enclosed coloring page. See if you can find her friends who are going on the exploration with her. Return your completed page to the nature center by October 22 for display.

◀Exploration Trail for 3-7 years of age

◀Interpretation stations for all ages

◀hands-on activities

◀costume corner

◀straw maze

◀and lots more!

Rain date is October 30.

No reservations required.



We're hungry and we don't mind you watchin'!

Stop by the nature center on the following days and watch the critters being fed.

October 1, 15, & 25

~ Fish - 10:30AM & 11:00AM

~ Turtles - 10:45AM